



A grand “Himno y Bandera” celebration for Aruba’s “Grandinan” of the St. Michael’s Paviljoen

Holidays are a special time in Aruba, when everyone attends wonderful events and celebrates. March 18, Himno y Bandera Day, the celebration of Aruba acquiring their own flag and national anthem is particularly noted for the many exciting activities that take place. Unfortunately, for the majority of the clientele of the St. Michael’s Paviljoen in Oranjestad, one of the island’s homes for the aged, it is not physically possible for them to attend these events, so the staff and caretakers bring the holidays to them.

This year, Social Coordinator Lisette Soeiro arranged a wonderful day with traditional music and entertainment that had the staff and clientele up and dancing to the music of Nelson Sprock on the “Caha di Orgel.” This beautiful instrument is usually handmade by the owner, and the equivalent of the familiar “organ grinder.” The internal drums that produce the music have been set up with the regional waltzes and mazurkas that put some spring in the steps of the “grandinan” (Papiamento for elderly) that are the residents of the St. Michael Paviljoen, and those that could were dancing with their attendants and each other.

The audience also enjoyed a dance performance by Trinitaria, and traditional songs from popular performer Sharon Rose. Joining Sharon at the microphone was Pasquelina Giel, a resident of St. Michael’s. At eighty years old, she is vibrantly active, and entertained the gathering with her songs and stand-up comedy in Papiamento, Dutch, English, and Spanish.

It was a wonderfully patriotic morning this past Friday at the St. Michael’s, and a memorable “Himno y Bandera” celebration for all!